State of Palestine
Ministry of Health
Minister's Office

دولـــة فـلـسـطين
وزارة الصحة
مكتب الوزير

Updated Report: Thursday, 21st of December 2023

The seventy-six Day of the Israeli aggression against Palestine

Daily Report on the Effects of the Israeli Aggression in Palestine

From October 7 until December 21, 2023

Some of the information contained in this report is as of Wednesday evening, 20th of December 2023.

The Emergency Operations Center at the Ministry of Health in Ramallah supervises the data collection process through its offices in Gaza. Numbers are updated every 24 hours. These numbers reflect confirmed statistics only but do not necessarily reflect all victims due to the fact that many victims are still missing under the rubble.

The escalating atrocities in Palestine as a result of Israeli aggression surpass mere numerical reporting, constituting severe violations of all human rights. The health system is deliberately targeted, amounting to a genocidal attack on the Palestinian people. This insufferable situation demands immediate intervention. We call upon all international humanitarian and health organizations to urgently enter Gaza, ensuring protection for health workers, facilities, and civilians. A tangible advocacy for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the ongoing siege on Gaza is imperative to halt this humanitarian crisis.

Current Situation:

Health System:

- From October 7 to December 20, about 20,000 Palestinians were martyred in the Gaza Strip, according to data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, about 70% of whom were women and children. About 55,000 people were reportedly injured, with many missing.
- Among the martyrs: more than 310 health sector workers, 97 journalists, about 35 civil defense crews, and 136 UNRWA employees.
- On December 20, the Palestine Red Crescent Society reported that Israeli occupation forces besieged its ambulance center in Jabalya, north of Gaza, affecting 127 people, including 22 injured patients. Contact was lost with the operations room and PRCS team in Gaza due to the telecommunications blackout.

- On December 19, Israeli occupation forces raided the premises of Al Ahli Hospital in the east of Gaza city, destroying the main entrance and reportedly arresting several medical staff and patients.
- On December 18, in Jabalya, bombardment and live ammunition reportedly hit the vicinity of Al Yaman as Saeed Hospital, injuring Palestinian Civil Defense personnel.
- UNICEF's spokesperson warned on December 19 that the risk of disease could have a devastating impact on children without a humanitarian ceasefire.
- Among the martyrs killed by the Israeli Occupation: more than 300 health sector workers, 86 journalists, about 35 civil defense crews, and 135 UNRWA employees.
- Al-Shifa, Al-Naser, and Al-Awda hospitals were again targeted by Israeli bombardment. Israeli Bombardments have renewed attacking Al-Shifa Hospital, described by WHO as a blood bath.
- On December 19, the World Food Programme (WFP) stated that half of Gaza's population is starving, facing extreme or severe hunger, and 90% regularly go without food for a whole day. Only ten percent of the required food for 2.2 million people entered Gaza in the last 70 days.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) said it was appalled by the destruction of Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza over the last several days because of the Israeli occupation attacks, rendering it non-functional and resulting in the killing of at least 8 patients.
- Ministry of Health calls for an inquiry into witness reports that Israeli bulldozers "buried people alive" at the Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza. Major parts of the hospital have been "destroyed" by the Israeli occupation forces, according to witness testimonies.
- Multiple health facilities and personnel were attacked on December 18 and 19 across the Gaza Strip. Israeli occupation forces reportedly raided Al Awda hospital in Jabalya, detaining and interrogating individuals, resulting in severe shortages of food, water, and medicine.
- The UN's Human Rights Office (OHCHR) issued a press statement on December 16, citing mass detentions, ill-treatment, torture, and enforced disappearances of potentially thousands of Palestinians by Israeli occupation forces, including children and women.
- The total number of wounded Palestinians and other medical cases evacuated since October 7 represents 1% of the reported injury toll. This corresponds to 500 people, while an additional 8,000 of the reported 50,897 injured require immediate medical intervention.
- Gaza is facing a stock-out of vaccinations, leading to catastrophic health repercussions.

- Currently, only 7 out of 36 hospitals in the Gaza Strip are partially functional, facing critical shortages of supplies and fuel, with occupancy rates reaching 206% in inpatient departments and 250% in intensive care units.
- According to UNICEF statistics, at least 1,000 children have had their limbs amputated without anesthesia up to this date.

Major Events: limited update in the past 24 hour due to severe disruption of communication

- As of December 19, most areas in the Gaza Strip experienced a sixth day without telecommunications or internet services, severely impacting emergency operations and access to information.
- Limited aid distributions continue to take place in Rafah governorate, where almost half of Gaza's population is now estimated to be residing. In the rest of the Gaza Strip, aid distribution has largely stopped, due to the intensity of Israeli aggression and restrictions on movement along the main roads,
- The Gaza Strip has remained under an electricity blackout since October 11, significantly impacting critical services.

Population and Displacement:

- On December 20, the Israeli occupation forces designated a new area covering about 20 % of central and south of Khan Younis city for immediate evacuation. The area was home to nearly 111,542 people and included 32 shelters with about 141,451 forcibly displaced persons. Evacuees were instructed to move immediately to overcrowded shelters further south in Rafah governorate.
- Since 7 October, at least 288 FDPs sheltering in UNRWA shelters have been martyred, and 998 injured.
- An airstrike struck a school sheltering forcibly displaced people (FDPs) in Khan Yunis on 15 December, reportedly killing 12 Palestinians and injuring dozens.
- Tens of thousands of FDPs in Rafah continue to face extremely overcrowded conditions, with a fourfold increase in population density.

- On 16 December, heavy Israeli bombardments and ground operations in Khan Younis and Rafah led to more forced displacement, exacerbating the overcrowded conditions in shelters.
- On 13 December, the Israeli occupation forces designated an additional area southwest of Khan Younis city, encompassing about 1.4 square kilometers, for immediate evacuation. This area was home to about 37,000 residents and an estimated 5,000 FDPs who took shelter in three designated emergency shelters in October 2023. Similar evacuations orders were issued in previous days for a large area east of Khan Younis. Collectively, these areas in the Khan Younis governorate encompass about 22 per cent of the Gaza Strip
- As of 12 December, according to UNRWA, more than 1.9 million people in Gaza, or nearly 90 % of the population, were estimated to be forcibly displaced. Nearly 1.2 million of these FDPs were registered in 154 UNRWA facilities across Gaza, of whom about one million are registered in 94 UNRWA shelters in the south.
- On average, UNRWA shelters in the middle and southern areas are currently hosting nine times the planned number of FDPs.
- Obtaining an accurate count is challenging, given difficulties including in tracking FDPs staying with host families, the movement of FDPs following evacuation orders since 1 December, and the evacuation of five UNRWA shelters in eastern Khan Younis on 6 December.
- UNRWA is verifying recent reports of incidents at UNRWA facilities. Since 7 October, 156 Israeli attacks affecting UNRWA premises have been reported.

Public Health catastrophe:

- On December 20, UNICEF reported that children in Gaza can access only 10% of their normal water use, heightening the risk of dehydration, diarrhea, disease, and malnutrition. The lack of safe water, compounded by seasonal rains and flooding, has led to almost 20 times the monthly average of reported cases of diarrhea among children under 5.
- Gaza is already experiencing soaring rates of infectious disease outbreaks, according to the Director General of WHO. Diarrhea cases among children under 5 have increased by 25 times since the conflict began, posing a lethal threat, especially in the absence of functioning health services.
- Gaza is facing a stock-out of vaccinations, leading to catastrophic health repercussions. More than 360,000 cases of infectious diseases, including acute respiratory infections, meningitis, jaundice, impetigo, and chickenpox, have been recorded in UNRWA shelters.

- The food security situation worsens in the south, with 44% of households reporting very severe hunger.
- The lack of formula for babies and poor sanitary conditions at UNRWA shelters contribute to the public health crisis.
- Decomposing remains of Gaza civilians pose a significant risk, heightening the threat of a public health crisis.
- Significant increases in communicable diseases reported in UNRWA shelters, including meningitis, jaundice, impetigo, chickenpox, respiratory tract infections, smallpox, diarrhea, and influenza.
- Lack of access to medical supplies and personnel at Kamal Adwan Hospital, coupled with attacks on medical facilities, threatens those requiring urgent medical care.
- Closure of hospitals and lack of medical supplies contribute to a severe public health crisis, impacting vulnerable groups.
- Sewage flowing in the streets, stopped pumping stations, and non-functional water wells contribute to unsanitary conditions, raising the risk of waterborne diseases.
- Stockout of vaccinations in Gaza leads to catastrophic health repercussions, especially among displaced people in overcrowded shelters; 360,000 cases of infectious diseases in shelters documented.
- Immediate and critical need for blankets, warm clothing, and adequate shelters with the onset of winter, as FDPs face floods with ill-prepared makeshift shelters.
- Decomposing remains of Gaza civilians due to Israeli occupation forces' actions pose an imminent and significant risk of a public health crisis.
- Lack of formula for babies in the current situation poses a severe risk of starvation and dehydration, contributing to a public health crisis.
- Overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions at UNRWA shelters in the south result in significant increases in some communicable diseases and conditions.
- Health conditions of FDPs outside UNRWA shelters are unclear, posing a public health risk due to limited access to medication, health facilities, and proper hygiene sources.
- On December 8th, the Gaza Municipality reported sewage flowing in the streets as pumping stations ceased operations due to a lack of fuel.

- Vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, pregnant and breastfeeding women, individuals recovering from injuries or surgeries, and those with weakened immune systems, face challenging shelter conditions.

Destroyed Buildings:

- Exact numbers of destroyed buildings are unavailable due to continued bombings.
- Latest updates indicate over 60% of housing units destroyed, exacerbating health vulnerabilities.
- A total of 342 school buildings have sustained damage (about 70 per cent of all school buildings in Gaza). Seventy of the schools damaged are UNRWA schools, with at least 56 serving as shelters for IDPs.

The West Bank, including Jerusalem:

- Since October 7, 303 Palestinians have been martyred in the West Bank, including Jerusalem. The year 2023 is the bloodiest year for Palestinians in the West Bank since 2005.
- Increasing attacks on hospitals, health centers, and ambulances increase in the West Bank, limiting access to basic healthcare services.
- Settler attacks continue, with 344 incidents recorded since 7 October.
- At least 189 Palestinian households comprising 1,257 people have been displaced amid settler violence and access restrictions.

Urgent Needs:

- Immediate cessation of Israeli brutal war against Palestinian civilians.
- Urgent implementation of international humanitarian laws protecting health institutions and civilians.
- Immediate and unconditional entry of humanitarian and health supplies into Gaza.
- Halt forcible displacement of civilians.
- Urgent support for search and rescue operations.